

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Archie R. Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

5:30 p.m. Executive Session, Mr. Plain made a motion at 5:35 p.m. to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-4 and §42-46-5 (a) (2) Paraprofessional Negotiations, Teacher Negotiations, §42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel-Non-Renewal. Mr. Fain seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Mr. Matt Plain; Mr. Michael Fain; Mr. Jeff Dronzek; Dr. Lori McEwen; and Dr. Yan Sun. Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, Vice-Chair was absent. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services; and Attorney Matthew Oliverio were also in attendance.

7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced a vote was taken in executive session to table Personnel-Non Renewal. The vote was 6-0.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. Public Comments

Colby Anderson, EGHS senior, provided the Committee with the results of an EGHS student start time survey. This survey was conducted during all three lunches on February 8, 2017. 426 students responded to the survey. Mr. Anderson noted he is the student representative (RIDE) for 147,000 students in R.I. Mr. Anderson spoke of the EGHS's mission to empower. He wanted to give the students a voice to express what they believe in. He said 96% of students surveyed think changes related to start times should have student input. Stuart Hallergan, EGHS senior, reviewed the survey results with the Committee.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular and Executive for February 7, 2017

On a motion by Dr. McEwen, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the regular and executive minutes.

V. Superintendent's Report

a. Commissioner Wagner's district visit

The Commissioner is scheduled to visit on March 30, 2017 starting at 12:00 p.m. A schedule is being developed and will be shared when available.

b. Screenagers viewing

The viewing will take place on March 9, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Cole Cafetorium.

c. Kindergarten Registration

Frenchtown registration takes place April 3 & 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and Meadowbrook takes place April 5 & 6 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

VI. Action Items

a. Appointments

1. Sophia Mascaro, 1:1 Paraprofessional, 1.0 FTE Frenchtown

On a motion by Mr. Plain, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the appointment.

b. Resignation

1. Melissa Rollings, Special Education Teacher, EGHS

On a motion by Mr. Dronzek, which was seconded by Mr. Plain, the Committee voted 6-0 to accept the resignation.

c. Parental leave

1. Amy Cerro, Grade 4 Teacher, Hanaford

On a motion by Dr. McEwen, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the parental leave.

d. Home School Approval-grade 7

On a motion by Mr. Plain, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted 6-0 to table the home school approval.

e. Date change for budget hearing and adoption (March)

The budget hearing and adoption dates will stay as is (March 7 and March 21 respectively). Both meetings will take place at Cole (in the cafetorium if need be).

If the Committee needs an additional meeting date, March 28th is available.

f. Schedule adjustment March 7th to March 14th meeting

The meeting for March 7th will stay as is.

VII. Advisory/Subcommittee Updates

a. Health and Wellness Committee

Ms. Mark discussed the Playworks grant that Eldredge received (\$7,500). This grant will allow seven members of the Eldredge community to attend training. Blue Cross/Blue Shield sponsors the grant. Ms. Mark thanked Nancy Day for participating in the initial training. The health/wellness survey was re-circulated to faculty/staff. Thirty surveys were received. Feedback will inform the work of the Committee. Ms. Mark discussed the pedal desks that were purchased with EGEF grant funds. The RIDE lunch inspection began today. The Health and Wellness Policy was reviewed to ensure the policy is up to date with regulation changes. The Committee is interested in holding a forum on physical activity. The next meeting will take place on March 15th in the Hanaford library.

b. Mental Health Subcommittee

The Committee discussed the results from the Health and Wellness survey. Several concerns were raised concerning mental health. The Committee discussed legislative bills that would require schools to include age-appropriate mental health topics in the health curriculum. There are also bills that will require RIDE to collect data on school social workers. May is mental health awareness month. The Committee will discuss possible activities at the March 13th meeting.

c. Policy Committee

The Committee met on Monday at 7:30 a.m. One community member

attended.

Mr. Podraza, Mrs. Vaughn, and Ms. Musella were thanked for attending and providing input. The Committee discussed the Transportation Policy and reviewed suggested edits submitted by Ms. Musella. Proposed changes will be brought to the School Committee for review. Mr. Plain asked if members of the Transportation Subcommittee and possibly Sgt. Carter could be present to provide valuable input. The Committee also discussed legislation that would allow districts to ask parents to opt-in for bus usage.

d. Finance Committee

The Committee met last week and discussed the budget workshop process. The group also spent time with Mr. Babson discussing technology. Mr. Peterson gave an update on OPEB and explained OPEB needs to be included on the balance sheet for the town and school. The Committee also discussed ideas to generate revenue.

e. Transportation Subcommittee

Ocean State was the only vendor that responded to the bus bid. Mr. Dronzek would like to award the bid to Ocean State at the March 7th meeting. Mr. Kenney, EGHS teacher, asked if the Committee could negotiate field trip prices. Mr. Dronzek explained the time/cost of buses in East Greenwich. The district runs five hours per day due to the geography of the town. Most districts run four hours. Ms. Musella discussed the need for communication procedures in the contract. Safe Stop and Ocean State are now the same organization.

VIII. Budget Workshops

a. Elementary

Mrs. Vaughn summarized the Frenchtown budget, which has a 6.64% proposed increase. No new budgeted items or new personnel changes are included. Mr. Marcaccio presented the Meadowbrook budget, which has a 19.06% increase. This budget includes a new grade 1 teacher. Eleven students are also slated to return to Meadowbrook. Mrs. Vaughn and Mr. Marcaccio discussed ideas and opportunities for future budgets, which include NGSS Science kits, Envision Math, and possibly a new reading series. Dr. McEwen would like a future discussion on how curriculum decisions are made (choice of kits, books, etc.).

Mrs. Cauley presented the Hanaford budget, which is a 0.44% increase over FY2017.

There is a need for a new grade 3 teacher for FY2018. Mr. Giusti summarized the Eldredge budget, which is a 3.87% increase over FY2017. No additional personnel are requested for FY2018. Mr. Giusti and Mrs. Cauley discussed the budget transfers that took place in FY2017. Some lines now show an increase/decrease in order to allocate funding properly. Mr. Giusti discussed the increase in new students this year (44). He said this is the largest increase he's seen in 11 years. Seventeen students are slated to return to grade 4 at Hanaford. Mr. Giusti also discussed the lack of space at Eldredge and the possibility of closing the computer lab for classroom space. Mrs. Cauley discussed the proposed vestibule change at Hanaford. Mr. Giusti discussed the high cost of mini buses (\$300-\$350) for field

trips. Mr. Dronzek will review this with Ocean State Transit. Dr. McEwen would like to have a conversation about economies of scale for professional development, prioritizing for strategic planning, etc.

Ms. Mark asked for an update on all day kindergarten and how the change in the law regarding recess is working at the elementary schools. Mr. Marcaccio and Mrs. Vaughn both agreed that all day kindergarten has been successful. Depth/rigor is balanced with developmental needs, fuller blocks of instruction, more small groups, etc. Mr. Giusti and Mrs. Cauley both agreed that the change in recess has been working well. Daily wellness time is included in all schedules plus traditional recess minutes.

b. Secondary

Mr. Seger presented the Cole budget, which shows an increase of 8.61% over FY2017. This is primarily due to non-discretionary items. Although current numbers project 646 students for FY2018, Cole has continued to see increases in new student enrollment over the summer. There are no new personnel requests except a new physical therapist (for the district) to replace a contracted worker.

Mr. Podraza summarized the EGHS budget, which has a projected increase of 6.07% over FY2017. It is estimated the EGHS will have 783 students in FY2018. Mr. Podraza said the EGHS typically sees a loss of 10% (students from Cole) prior to the start of the year. If the district doesn't see a loss, the EGHS may see 806 students for FY2018. Mr. Podraza is requesting a 0.2FTE increase for a guidance

position and a 0.6FTE increase in electives for Capstone programs. Mr. Podraza explained the connection between the Capstone courses/Senior Project and detailed the pathways for senior project. There were questions about music/art, which will be discussed at the next budget meeting.

c. Athletics

Mr. Cobain explained how he estimates transportation costs (# of buses) based on the number of games/sports, whether games are home/away, officials needed, and adds an additional bus. There are approximately 478 EGHS students who play sports and 195 Cole students (FY2017). He explained the most expensive sports: hockey and swimming. He also discussed the request from Special Olympics to absorb the costs for unified sports. Mr. Cobain discussed the lagging coaching salaries and the Committee that researched district coaching salaries (Appendix B). The cost to increase salaries was estimated at \$75,000 (these are now “outdated numbers”). He also discussed the continued interest in starting a track program at Cole.

IX. Discussion

a. FY2018 Budget

Mr. Dronzek asked for clarification on the health rate increases. Mrs. Wilcox explained the numbers are moving targets and are based on the best-known information at the time (including compounding factors).

b. I.T. Governance Committee Charge

Mr. Plain would like legal counsel to review the Charge since it involves school personnel and two members of the School

Committee. Attorney Oliverio will need to contact the town solicitor. If Attorney Oliverio can't be present at the March 2nd meeting, the town will be asked to table the item. Ms. Mark wants the language to note that the town and the school retain separate decision-making authority. Ms. Mark will reach out to the town council leadership. Dr. Mercurio explained the work of the district technology committee and doesn't want a redundancy of efforts. He is happy to collaborate with the town to share expertise, costs, etc., but does not want the School Committee to relinquish care, custody, and control of the schools.

X. School Committee Concerns/Important Matters Pending

There were no concerns.

XI. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Plain, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 9:33 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY